

Astronomical, &c.

CELESTIAL PHENOMENA FOR 1836.

"THE Heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handy work." Such was the exclamation of the pious Psalmist the "sweet singer of Israel," when he was no doubt contemplating the gem-studded expanse. Since his day what mighty revolutions have happened, and generations of the human race have born and died: Still these lamps of heaven have continued to hold on their course with undeviating regularity. Every thing bears the impress of the wisdom and power of the Deity. It is seen in the creation of the glorious Sun; the Planets and the Stars,—seen in the majestic form of the Cedar of Lebanon, equally so in the tuft of grass we tread under our feet—seen in the strength of the lion of the woods, and in the smallest animalculæ requiring microscopic aid to manifest their existence to the senses. Man stands confessedly the noblest of all the Creator's works here below, possessed of powers of mind, formed to contemplate his Maker's works, by him alone of all God's creatures can the book of nature be read. Having above, below and around him, such unbounded scope for the exercise of his contemplative faculties; how lamentable is it that the generality of his species prostitute to the vilest purposes those noble faculties of the soul, which he is endowed with, and which ought to be employed in his great Benefactor's service and to His glory, and in the advancement of the happiness and knowledge of his fellow creatures.

Perhaps to a contemplative mind, there is not a more congenial study, or one more fitted to lead the mind "from nature up to nature's God," than the noble science of Astronomy. What an amazing grasp of intellect, to measure the magnitudes and orbits of those heavenly bodies, composing our system, to calculate with unerring precision their various phenomena, and to render such knowledge subservient to the purposes of commerce, and the intercourse of man with man, by guiding the mariner in the pathless ocean. To contemplate the Creator of these shining orbs, as our Maker and Benefactor is consolatory, but to be able to say upon a sure foundation, that he is *our* God, *our* Father, and *our* Friend, raises us as it were above this lower world, and the eye of faith pierces through the veil of mortality, and the glories of eternity appear to blaze upon our view, when we shall be perfectly blessed with Him in heaven.

Reader, that this be our happy privilege, may God of his mercy grant; then whether this year be our last we shall spend on earth, or our lives be prolonged, we may await the approach of the King of Terrors undismayed.